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RECORD OF MARTYRDOM

V.

JAPANESE
RECORD OF MARTYRDOM OF
JAPANESE CHRISTIANS

BY
Kumakichi Sekiguchi

R E C O R D O F M A R T Y R D O M

O F

J A P A N E S E C H R I S T I A N S

B y

Kumakichi Sekiguchi

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM OF
JAPANESE CHRISTIANS

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North Japan College 1914

Theological Department, North Japan College

1917

B. D. San Francisco Theological Seminary 1927.

THESIS

Submitted in the department of History of
Religion in partial fulfillment of M. A. Degree
in Pacific School of Religion

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CONTENTS

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION.....p. 1

Chapter II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND..... 6

Chapter III

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM, Part 1..... 19

Chapter IV

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM, Part 2..... 31

Chapter V

CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY
AND BUDDHISM..... 41

Chapter VI

WITNESS OF A SHINTO PRIEST..... 51

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION..... 57

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM OF JAPANESE CHRISTIANS

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

If we read the statement of Marco Polo we might think that ancient Japan was a rich country. In his account he says:

① "Zipangu is an island towards the east in the high seas, fifteen hundred miles distant from the Continent, and a very great island it is. The people are white, civilized, and well-favoured. And I can tell you, the quantity of gold they have is endless; for they find it in their own island, and the king does not allow it to be exported. Moreover, few merchants visit the country, because it is so far from the mainland, and thus it comes to pass that their gold is abundant beyond all measure. You must know that the king has a great palace which is entirely roofed with fine gold, just as our churches are roofed with lead, insomuch that it would scarcely be possible to estimate its value. Moreover, all the pavement of the palace and the floors of its chambers are entirely of gold, in plates like slabs of stone, a good two fingers thick; and the windows also are of gold, so that altogether the richness of this palace is past all bounds and all belief. They have also pearls in abundance, which are of a rose colour, but fine, big and round, and quite as valuable as the white ones." etc.

But this statement of Marco Polo was not a true description of ancient Japan. The truth was that the ages of Japan's old feudalism, from the time of Yoritomo to the time of Hideyoshi, were most dark ages in which battle after battle was fought continually. Waste and desolation prevailed in the cities and also in the country, so that the people, and even the Emperor in his capital city, suffered in poverty. Marco Polo seems to have been told the story of Japan by someone who knew China; but the narrator seems not to have known the real Japan at all. The statement belongs to an idle fancy or an exaggerated rumor, and it has no historical foundation whatsoever.

Just as Marco Polo exaggerated the natural resources of Japan, so Dr. Nitobe describes the virtue of the Japanese people, exaggerating the spirit of the Samurai as the only flower which bloomed in the land. In his book entitled The Way of the Knight Dr. Nitobe writes as follows:

⑧ "Chivalry is a flower no less beautiful to the soil of Japan than its emblem, the cherry blossom; nor is it a dried-up specimen of an antique virtue preserved in the herbarium of our history. It is still a living object of power and beauty among us; and if it assumes no tangible shape or form, it none the less accents the moral atmosphere and makes us aware that we are still under its potent spell. The conditions of society which brought it forth

and nourished it have long disappeared; but as those far-off stars which once were and are not, still continue to shed their rays upon us, so the light of chivalry, which was a child of feudalism, still illuminates our moral path, surviving its mother institution."

③ "As to its ethical doctrines, the teachings of Confucius were the most prolific source of Bushido (the way of the knight). His enunciation of the five moral relations between master and servant, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and between friend and friend, was but a confirmation of what the race instinct had recognized before his writings were introduced from China. The calm, benignant, and worldly-wise character of his politico-ethical precepts was particularly well-suited to the Samurai, who formed the ruling class."

④ And Dr. Nitobe, after having ascribed all good characteristics -- e.g., justice, courage, benevolence, politeness, sincerity, honour, loyalty, and self-control to the spirit of the Samurai, also maintains that this Samurai spirit had a great influence upon the ten millions of common people in Japan. He continues:

⑤ "What Japan was, she owed to the Samurai. The way of the Samurai was not only the flower of the nation, but its root as well. All the gracious gifts of Heaven

flowed through the knights. Though they kept themselves socially aloof from the populace, they set a moral standard for them and guided them by their example. As among flowers the cherry is queen, so among men the Samurai is lord. Intellectual and moral Japan was directly or indirectly the work of Knighthood."

The writer of this paper, however, is one who does not support the words of Dr. Nitobe. Chivalry, or the Samurai spirit, is not the flower of Japan. On the contrary, the Samurai spirit hindered the progress of civilization in Japan and the religious enlightenment of the Japanese people.

In the first place, the virtues which Dr. Nitobe ascribed to the Samurai spirit are only his own ideals and not the facts which the old Samurai people had realized.

Secondly, Dr. Nitobe is very partial. He speaks only of the good side of the Samurai and never of the faults or crimes of the Knights.

In the third place, Dr. Nitobe is very old-fashioned and conservative. He does not seem to understand the spirit of democracy. He praises Japanese chivalry, in reality a mere phantom of the caste system.

Fourth, Dr. Nitobe thinks that the four hundred thousand Samurai only had lived moral lives while thirty million common people in Japan (the population at the beginning of the Meiji era) had no moral sense at all;

and thus he despises the majority of true Japanese people.

We remember that our Lord Jesus says, "Why call me good? No one is good, no one but God." Again he says, "Truly, truly I tell you, no one can see God's realm unless he is born from above." The man who is born of this world neither sees His Kingdom nor knows what is good and virtuous. The spirit of the Samurai is the spirit of the worldly man, and it is not a spirit come from above.

In this era of the history of Japan, those who opposed the spirit of God, those who killed the Christians, and those who persecuted the truly righteous were the rulers, the feudal lords, and the knights, the sponsors of the spirit of chivalry.

In this brief record the writer wishes to describe how great an error worldly men committed; and how Christians, people re-born by God, realized, in one era of the history of Japan, true virtue and true goodness.

We must recognize the truth of Christianity when it states, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Only a man who is born again can realize true virtue and true goodness through his life.

Chapter II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Those who know the history of Japan do not need to read this outline of the historical background of the persecution of Japanese Christians; but to those who are not familiar with Japanese history I want to present the following short statement. I quote mainly from the book by Dr. W. E. Griffis, who was for many years a professor of the Imperial University in Tokyo. Because he is not a native born Japanese, however, even this great scholar has made some errors in his book about Japan. These errors have been amended by my own hand in quoting sentences from his book.

④ The first period of Japanese Christianity lasted nearly a century, or, exactly speaking, from 1542 to 1637. This was during the feudalistic age, a very dark period in the history of Japan. The duarchy of Emperor and Camp, with the Mikado in Kyoto and the Shogun in Kamakura, with the elaborate feudalism under it, had fallen into decay. The whole country was split up into many hundred warring parties. In the strife between these parties only the priests of Buddhism (the Bonzes) and the warriors (the Samurai) were in comfort, while the mass of the people were spending their days as

peasants in a condition little better than that of European serfs. There was almost nothing to uplift and cheer the people.

Shinto had sunk into the shadow of a myth, while Buddhism had become outwardly a system of political gambling rather than an expression of the heart of faith. The temples were fortresses in which only the great political gamblers, and not the oppressed people, found comfort and help. Kyoto, the sacred capitol, had been again and again plundered and burned, and Kamakura, the former seat of the General-Governors (Shogun) was a level waste of ashes.

④ Yet the people who lived in darkness saw a light. To them that dwelt in the shadow of death, light sprang up. Portuguese navigators sailed around Africa to India and past the golden Chersonese. In 1542 they reached Japan. Mendez Pinto, on a Chinese pirate ship which had been driven by a storm away from her companions, set foot upon a small island called Tanegashima. Pinto introduced guns and powder there. While Japanese were coming in contact with foreigners on their own soil, they were also meeting the foreigners on foreign shores. They could be found as far west as India.

⑤ While Francis Xavier was laboring in Malacca there came a refugee Japanese named Anjiro. Xavier, ever restless and ready for a new field, was fired with the idea of

converting the Japanese. Anjiro, converted in the presence of God and Xavier, was baptized with the name of Paul. Xavier sailed with Anjiro to Japan, landing at Kagoshima in 1549. Xavier, having no skill in the learning of the Japanese languages, began his work with the aid of an interpreter. But the feudal lord in Satsuma compelled Xavier to leave this province and Xavier went first to Hirado, next to Nagato, and then to Bungo, where he was well received. Teaching through his Japanese interpreter, he formed Christian congregations, especially at Yamaguchi. His ambition was now to go to the imperial capital, Kyoto. Though he had heard of the unsettled state of the country because of the long-continued strife, he evidently expected to find the capital a splendid city. When he reached Kyoto he found streets covered with ruins, rubbish, and unburied corpses, and a general situation of wretchedness. He tried to preach but could obtain no hearers in this time of war and confusion. So after two weeks he turned his face again southward to Bungo, where he labored for some months. Then he attempted to spread the Gospel also in China. But one year later, December 2, 1551, he died on the island of Shanshan, in the Canton River.

Nevertheless Xavier's inspiring example was like a shining star that attracted scores of missionaries.

There being in this time of political anarchy and religious paralysis none to oppose them, their zeal, within five years, bore surprising fruits. They wrote home that there were seven churches in the region around Kyoto, while a score or more of Christian congregations had been gathered in the southwest.

In 1581 there were 200 churches and 150,000 native Christians. Oda Nobunaga, the Governor-Regent (1534-1582) of the Emperor, openly welcomed and patronized the Christians and gave them desirable sites on which to build dwellings and churches. (J) But when he became so proud that he wanted to be worshipped in the same rank with Jesus he was assassinated by Akechi Mitsuhide, one of his vassals, in 1582.

In 1583 an embassy of four young men was dispatched by the Christian feudal lords of Kyushu to the Pope to declare themselves spiritual vassals of the Holy See. After an absence of eight years, in 1590, the envoys from the oriental to the occidental ends of the earth returned to Nagasaki, accompanied by seventeen more Jesuit fathers, an important addition to the many Portuguese of that order already in Japan.

Now Toyotomi Hideyoshi, another vassal of Nobunaga, became the Governor-Regent, after he had conquered the army of Mitsuhide, and reigned over Japan from 1536 to 159⁷.

Greater than his dead master Nobunaga, and ingenious in the arts of war and peace, Hideyoshi compelled the warring feudal lords, even the proud lord of Satsuma, to yield to his power. Thus Japan had once more a central government, intensely despotic, and with it the new religion must sooner or later reckon.

In order to employ the vast bodies of armed men hitherto accustomed to the trade of war and withal jealous of China and hostile to Korea, Hideyoshi planned the invasion of the little peninsula kingdom by his veterans whose swords were restless in their scabbards. After months of preparation, he dispatched an army in two great divisions, one under the Christian general Konishi Yukinaga, and one under the Buddhist general Kato Kiyomasa. After a brilliant campaign of eighteen days, the rivals, taking different routes, met in the Korean capital.

During the war there was always more or less jealousy, mostly military and personal, between Yukinaga and Kiyomasa. The latter, being then and afterward a fierce champion of the Buddhists, glorified his orthodoxy, which was that of the Nichiren sect. He went into battle with a banner full of texts stuck in his back and flying behind him. His example was copied by hundreds of his officers and soldiers.

(K) Yukinaga, however, was not at an advantage for two reasons. Not only had he fewer soldiers, but in negotiating with the Koreans and the Chinese Allies he had to

depend upon the European priests as interpreters. As negotiations had to be conducted in Chinese script the Christian fathers could not be expected to be so useful as the Buddhist priests. As a result Kiyomasa was more successful in Korea than Yukinaga.

Battles after battles were fought in the Korean land for many years. But as the result of the death of Hideyoshi in Japan (1597), the armies returned to their mother country, making peace with the Koreans.

In those days, according to the statistics of historians, there were two hundred thousand Christians among the common people in Japan. However, a cult that winked at polygamy was less opposed to Hideyoshi's sensualism and amazing vanity. The illustrious upstart was easily made hostile to the alien faith, and the predominating influence at the Kyoto court was Buddhist. There were at this time sixty-five foreign missionaries in the country. Then began a series of persecutions which, however, were carried on spasmodically and locally. Bitter in some places, they were neutralized, or the law became a dead letter, in other parts of the realm. In spite of the issuance of the edict of intolerance in 1588, ten thousand new converts were made in the following year.

Spain longed for trade with Japan and her merchants hoped to displace their Portuguese rivals. Hence the Spanish Franciscans did not scruple to wear a political cloak and thus override the Pope's bull of world-partition

in their determination to get a foothold beside the Jesuits in Japan. So in 1593 a Spanish envoy of the governor of the Philippine Islands came to Kyoto, bringing four Spanish Franciscan priests who were allowed to build houses in Kyoto. They were allowed to come, however, only as envoys of a friendly power and with the understanding that they were not to preach, either publicly or privately. Violating almost immediately their pledge and the hospitality granted them, these Spaniards, wearing the vestments of their order, openly preached in the streets. Besides exciting discord among the Christian congregations founded by the Jesuits, they were violent in their language.

Hideyoshi, to gratify his own mood and test his power as the actual ruler for a shadowy emperor, seized nine preachers while they were building churches at Kyoto and Osaka. They were led to the execution ground in exactly the same fashion as felons and executed by crucifixion at Nagasaki, February 5, 1597. Three Japanese Jesuit preachers, six Spanish Franciscan fathers, and seventeen native believers were stretched on crosses and their bodies from thigh to shoulder were transfixed with spears. They met their doom uncomplainingly.

In 1597 Hideyoshi died and the missionaries took heart again. The Christian soldiers returning by thousands from Korea declared themselves in favor of Hideyori, the son of Hideyoshi. Encouraged by those in power, the fathers renewed their work and the number of converts increased.

But in October, 1600, with seventy-five thousand men, Tokugawa Iyeyasu (1542-1616) stood on the ever-memorable field of Sekigahara. With the craft of Kiyomasa, the ambition of Iyeyasu was to beat down the influence of Yukinaga, the Christian general, and to assume for himself the power of the dead Hideyoshi. The opposing army, led largely by Christian commanders, left their fortress to meet Iyeyasu, whom they considered a usurper, in the open field. In the battle which ensued, probably the most decisive ever fought on the soil of Japan, ten thousand men lost their lives.

The leading Christian generals, beaten, but refusing on principle, because they were Christians, to take their own lives by harakiri, knelt willingly at the common blood-pit and had their heads stricken off by the executioner. Then Iyeyasu ^{cl} declared himself to be the General-governor and the lord of lords in Japan (1603).

Thus began a new era in the history of the empire, and then there were laid, by Iyeyasu, the foundation lines upon which the Japan best known to Europe has existed for nearly three centuries.

In adjusting the feudal relations of his vassals in Kyushu, Iyeyasu made great changes and the political status of the Christians was profoundly altered. (4) The new feudal lords, carrying out the policy of Iyeyasu, began to persecute their Christian subjects and to compel them

to renounce their faith. One of the leading opposers of the Christians and their most cruel persecutor was Ki-yomasa, the zealous Nichirenite. The Christians of Kyushu, in a few cases, actually took up arms against their new rulers and oppressors, though it was a new thing under the Japanese sun for peasantry to oppose not only civil servants of the law, but veterans in armor.

Iyeyasu, now having time to give his attention wholly to matters of government and to examine the new forces that had entered Japanese life, followed Hideyoshi in the suspicion that, under the cover of the western religion, there lurked political designs. He thought he saw confirmation of his theories because the foreigners still secretly or openly paid court to Hideyori, and at the same time freely disbursed gifts and gold as well as comfort to the persecuted. Resolving to crush the spirit of independence in the converts and to intimidate the foreign emissaries, Iyeyasu with steel and blood put down every outbreak, and at last, in 1606, issued his edict prohibiting Christianity.

In 1610 the wrath of the government was especially aroused against the bateren, as the people called the padres, by their open and persistent violation of the law of Iyeyasu. In 1611 from Sado, to which island thousands of Christian exiles had been sent to work the mines, Iyeyasu believed he had obtained documentary proof in the Japanese language

of what he had long suspected -- the existence of a plot on the part of the native converts and the foreign emissaries to reduce Japan to the position of a subject state. Putting forth strenuous measures to root out utterly what he believed to be a pestilential breeder of sedition and war, the General-governor advanced step by step to that great proclamation of January 27, 1614, in which the foreign priests were branded as triple enemies -- of the country, of the Kami, and of the Buddhas.

Three hundred persons, namely twenty-two Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustines, one hundred and seventeen foreign Jesuits, and nearly two hundred native priests and catechists were arrested, sent to Nagasaki, and thence shipped like bundles of combustibles to Macao.

Yet as many of the foreign and native Christian teachers hid themselves in the country and as others who had been banished returned secretly and continued the work of propaganda, the crisis had not yet come. Some of the Jesuit priests, even, were still hoping that Hideyori would mount to power; but in 1615, Iyeyasu, finding a pretext for war, called out a powerful army and laid siege to the castle of Osaka, the most imposing fortress in the country. In the brief war which ensued it is said by the Jesuit fathers that one hundred thousand men perished. On June 9, 1615, the castle was captured and the citadel burned.

After thousands of Hideyori's followers had committed harakiri, and his own body had been burned to ashes, the Christian cause was irretrievably ruined.

Hidetada, the successor of Iyeyasu in Yedo, who ruled from 1605 to 1622, saw that his father's peaceful methods had failed in extirpating the alien politico-religious doctrine, and pronounced sentence of death on every foreigner, priest, or catechist found in the country. The story of the persecutions and horrible sufferings that ensued is told in the voluminous literature which may be gathered from every country in Europe.

In 1617 foreign commerce was restricted to Hirado and Nagasaki. In 1621 Japanese were forbidden ever to leave the country. For years, at intervals and in places, the books of the Inferno were opened, and the tortures devised by the native pagans and Buddhists equalled in their horror those which Dante imagines, until finally, in 1636, even Japanese human nature, accustomed for ages to subordination and submission, could stand it no longer.

At that time a man named Nirado Shiro raised the banner of the Cross and called on all Christians and others to follow him. Probably as many as thirty thousand native men, women, and children, laymen, and clerics gathered from parts of Kyushu. After burning Shinto and Buddhist temples

they fortified an old abandoned castle at Shimabara, resolving to die rather than submit. Against an army of veterans, led by skilled commanders, the fortress held out during four months. At last, after a bloody assault, it was taken, and men, women, and children were slaughtered. Thousands suffered death at the point of the spear and sword; many were thrown into the sea; and others were cast into boiling hot springs, emblems of the eight Buddhist Hells.

Thus Japanese Christianity having vanished into blood was supposed to have no existence. Yet in 1865 the Roman Catholic fathers at Nagasaki found to their surprise that they were reopening the old mines and that their work was in historic continuity with that of their predecessors. The blood of the martyrs had been the seed of the church. Amid much ignorance and darkness there were tens of thousands of people who, through the Virgin, worshipped God, talked of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit, and refused to worship at the pagan shrines.

Those who were suspected of being Christians were sent to Yamaguchi and imprisoned, even to the end of the age of the Shogunate. But still there were found some tens of thousands of true Christians at Uragami, Hirado, and Goto, etc., in the Nagasaki district at the end of that age. What could ever part them from Christ's

love? Could anguish or calamity or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger of the sword accomplish this end? Nothing was powerful enough to cause them to forget God's love as made known through Christ Jesus.

Chapter III

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM, Part 1

It was quite natural that the rulers should forbid the people to write true records while they were persecuting the Christians and killing them in cruel ways. If anyone had written a true record he would have been punished by the rulers and the records would have been confiscated and burned. For this reason we have no true account, written in the Japanese languages, of the martyrdom of the Japanese Christians. (M) But happily, or unhappily, the records which were written by the hands of the Catholic fathers were kept safely in the western countries, though the records were fragmentary writings recounting the facts. Such records were introduced into Japan when the Catholic fathers were again permitted to propagate the Gospel of Jesus into that country after the new era of Japanese restoration of the Meiji. Fathers Leon Pages, Trigaut, Crasset, Charlevoix, and Villion were the great figures who compiled the history of Japanese Christianity from the fragments of the old records.

In Japan there are scholars (for example Anesaki, Masaharu, Niimura Izuru, Kinoshita Mokutaro, Yoshino Sakuzo, Matsuzaki Minoru, and Hiyane Yasusada, etc.) who have been very devoted in their research into the

facts of the history of the old Catholic missions. They found and corrected some errors in the writings of the old foreign fathers; they imagined parts which had not been described explicitly and completed the passages written by the fathers. They found no records written by the native Christians at the time of the persecutions, but they listened to the traditions handed down orally from the people living in the days of the persecutions.

In this paper the writer will attempt to state some of the major events of the martyrdom of the Japanese Christians. Most of the material is quoted from the writings of Perè A. Villion and Antonio Francisco Cardim, with reference to some notes of Japanese commentators. For a detailed history of the matter the reader is referred to the books mentioned in the bibliography. In particular, those wishing to know the reasons why the general rulers of the Tokugawa family forbade the teaching of Christianity in Japan should read the Christian Library of Professor Hiyane, who was a former student of Dr. Anesaki and Professor of History of Religion in the Aoyama-Gakuin Theological Seminary. He is collecting the records written by Japanese opponents of Christianity in the age of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

④ Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the Governor Regent, was favorably disposed toward the Franciscan fathers. He saw how devoted

were the lives of those fathers, and one day he remarked to his vassals that there must be a future life -- a heaven and a hell. "If not," said Hideyoshi, "I cannot explain why these good fathers are living such devoted lives. I once forbade the fathers in the Nagasaki district to preach, but I will allow the fathers in the Kwansai District to preach freely, because I am not afraid of them. They are very humble and poor, but they seem like living Bodhisattvas to my eyes."

① In July, 1596, the first year of Keicho, there was a rain of white ash from the heavens upon the city of Kyoto, and of red sand upon the city of Osaka. In August of the same year there appeared a great comet in the western sky, and the people were very fearful of the comet, thinking that it was an omen of evil. As they doubted, their worries increased at the occurrence of great earthquakes from the first to the fourth days of September when many temples and houses were destroyed. Following these earthquakes there came a great flood and many people were drowned. Many priests of Buddhism gathered together and consulted as to what they could do to save the people. They wrote a petition and sent it to Hideyoshi saying, "Dear Governor-Regent: How do you think of these calamities which visited us one after another? This is your own fault because you allowed the wicked foreign monks to preach their wicked

religion. Our national gods and Buddhas have become very angry with you and have visited your people with these calamities. Now you shall drive away all Kirishitan fathers out of the land of Japan and mitigate the minds of the Japanese gods."

But when he had read the message from the Buddhist priests, Hideyoshi laughed at them and said, "Foolish advice you have brought to me; the earthquake and flood are natural phenomena which visit this country often. I do not care if the anger of the gods is turned against me. You are merely trying to persuade me to wicked actions prompted by your own jealousy and evil hearts."

(P) On November 18th of the same year a big ship with a broken mast was seen floating on the waves far out at sea off the port of Urato in Tosa Province. The fishermen, seeing this ship, launched their boats and brought the ship into port. It belonged to a General-governor of Luzon Island, and on it were seven preachers and many sailors on the way to New Spain. The men on the ship were greatly obliged to the Japanese for their safety. Matias, the captain of the ship, brought some gold money and other precious presents to Chosokabe, the feudal lord in Tosa Province, saying, "We cordially ask you to accept this money and other presents in behalf of the General-governor of Japan and the four mayors of the great cities." Masuda Nagamori, the Mayor of Osaka, received the good report

from Chosokabe Motochika regarding the present from Matias, the captain of the wrecked ship. Nagamori was a very covetous man and he sent a messenger to Hideyoshi advising him not only to receive the present but also to hold the ship and to confiscate all the cargo. Hideyoshi did not heed Nagamori at first, thinking it unfair to the captain and to the country of Spain. But other vassals joined in this advice, and because Hideyoshi was a man of very slight religious belief he listened favorably at last to the advice of Nagamori and ordered his vassals to seize the ship and confiscate all the cargo -- money and munitions. The ministers of the general's government declared to the people, "We caught hold on the ship from the Luzon Island and confiscated all the cargo because the ship had seven Kirishitan fathers in the cabin who were going to preach the religion which we forbade three years ago. Moreover they have some arms and munitions in their ship. They are planning to fight with us if we do not believe in their foreign religion. Therefore we confiscated all their cargoes." Ajari Jakuin, a wicked monk of Buddhism, heard of this and he visited the mansion of Hideyoshi and questioned him, saying, "Sire, you have taken the fathers in the ship whose crime is not established. Then why do you not punish the other preachers whose crime is very clear? They are preaching an evil religion everywhere, establishing wicked schools, and deceiving the people with magic.

They are entirely against your law. You have forbidden all Kirishitans from preaching three years ago, but the fathers of that religion do not obey you. Why then do you not punish all the fathers of Kirishitan?"

Hideyoshi knew the wicked heart of Jakuin, but as he could find no word of excuse, he answered Jakuin saying, "I don't know much about the Kirishitan; it is the responsibility of Hasegawa to whom I entrusted all business of religion. If there is any fault Hasegawa shall be punished." And Hideyoshi punished Hasegawa with death, and was planning to punish all Kirishitans in the Japanese country. But many feudal lords advised Hideyoshi not to punish them with death, and Hideyoshi desisted. He ordered Masuda Nagamori to watch the preachers of the Franciscans and Jesuits in Osaka, and Ishida Mitsunari the Franciscans in Kyoto.

② Ishida Mitsunari, the mayor of Kyoto, was a good man and had a very kind heart toward the Catholic religion. Therefore he asked Hideyoshi not to punish the Christian fathers. But Hideyoshi shook his head and said, "The people of Spain took Mexico and Luzon already, and they came into our country planning some future work. I do not like to be deceived by Spanish people. Since I know what they are planning I seized their ship and forbade them to preach religion. But now I think the Jesuit preachers

are good men. I will give Jesuits only permission to preach." Hideyoshi in truth did not trust the Jesuit fathers, but he was afraid of them since there were a great many people who believed in the faith of the Jesuits. Hence he feared that there might be a revolt against him if he persecuted the Jesuits.

Thus Hideyoshi excused the Jesuit fathers from punishment. People expected that the Franciscan fathers would be excused from capital punishment and only forced to leave the country. But contrary to expectation Hideyoshi decided to punish the Franciscan preachers with death. Those from Osaka were taken to Kyoto and all of them had their noses cut off and were then sent to Nagasaki to be punished with death. These fathers were exceedingly thankful to Heaven and said in concert, "O what happy men we are! The time comes when we can ascend to heaven and see Our Lord Jesus face to face."

On February 5th, 1597, twenty-six Christians were crucified on trees at Tateyama, in Nagasaki. Among them were Franciscan Fathers Petero Baptista, Agira Martin, Francisco Branco, Michael Francisco, Gonzarga Rusia, Iezus Philipo; Jesuit preachers Polo Miki, Iohane Suwano, Iohane Kizaemon; and seventeen laymen.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi died in the same year that he thus persecuted the Christian fathers and believers (1597), and

Tokugawa Ieyasu became General-governor, after defeating the army of Toyotomi (1603). Ieyasu was much more cunning than Hideyoshi, though not so soft hearted.

⑧ Kato Kiyomasa, a former vassal of the Toyotomi family, now turning against his former master, became a vassal of the Tokugawa family. Kiyomasa hated Christianity as much as he hated Yukinaga, the good vassal of the Toyotomi family. Yukinaga died in the battle of Sekigahara and Kiyomasa was appointed governor of Higo district. He not only persecuted Japanese Christians himself but he also became an advisor to the Tokugawa family in their persecution of Christians. At the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate we can count more than one hundred and fifty persecutions, and the number of martyrs was so large that it cannot be counted. A. F. Cardim mentions many names of those who died as martyrs for the sake of Jesus Christ, but it is supposed that many more died without being recorded in records of this world and whose names are only on the holy record of Heaven.

⑨ In December, 1603, Iohane Minami and Simon Takeda were beheaded because they would not forsake their faith. When Kato Kiyoma-sa became the governor of Higo District he desired to destroy all Christians under his rule. He called Iohane to the city of Kumamoto and examined him ⁱⁿ ~~for~~ the office of ^{the} mayor. A bonze of the Buddhist temple

named Hommyoji brought suit against Iohane and offered the mayor many false witnesses against him. When Iohane began to preach the truth of the Catholic faith before the mayor, the bonze came and covered the head of Iohane with a cloth written with some Buddhist verses of scripture. Then Iohane took off the cloth and threw it aside and two Samurai caught him and threw him to the floor. While Iohane called the names of Ave Maria and Jesus the Samurai killed him by choking. This was on December 7th, 1603. On the same day a judge named Kakuzaimon came to the home of Takeda Simon bringing a message from Kiyomasa and ordered him to be killed. Simon was not at all sorry, but made clean his house and his own body. Then he sat in the presence of the image of Jesus on the cross and prayed. He bade his mother and wife goodbye and was killed by the sword of Kakuzaimon.

The next day, December 8th, some Samurai brought a woman named Madarena (the wife of Iohane) and a boy Luis (the son of Iohane) to the house of Simon. They killed these two members of the Minami family with four members of the Takeda family there. Yohanna, the mother, Agnes, the wife, and two sisters of Takeda Simon were killed at the same time with the two from the Minami family. The night her son Simon was killed Yohanna took up the head of Simon and holding it to her breast, burst into tears,

saying, "O good boy, my dearest Simon, how happy I am that I could bring you up until today and could offer you unto our Lord as a holy sacrifice for His sake!" She said again unto the multitude of people who came to look upon their martyrdom, "My friends, I am not afraid at all of those who can kill my body but cannot kill my soul. If you wish to receive the eternal life of the soul you must also obey the teachings of Jesus as I did." Those who heard these words burst into tears.

⑦ On August 16, 1605, a faithful Samurai named Kumagae Buzen-no-Kami was beheaded at Yamaguchi. He held some power at Hiroshima. He not only became a Christian himself but he also built a great church for all believers in his district. But his feudal lord, the Duke of Mori, was very angry against him so he suddenly sent many soldiers to surround his mansion and ordered him to commit harakiri. Kumagae answered Yanagisawa Sanzaemon, the leader of the soldiers, "I, a Christian, will not kill myself, but I am willing to die for the sake of His name; therefore you take me into the presence of our Duke and kill me before him." Yanagisawa understood that Kumagae was a righteous man and was afraid to kill him publicly. So he killed him that day in Kumagae's own mansion in Yamaguchi, and on the next day he killed all the family of Kumagae and all his vassals.

⑧ On August 19th, 1605, the martyrdom of Christians took place at Yamaguchi. Among many martyrs there was a

blind man named Damiano. He belonged to a certain class of beggars, living by asking for food and coins, going about here and there and singing and playing a musical instrument called biwa. After receiving baptism he became a very earnest Christian and assisted the work of the missionaries at Yamaguchi for more than twenty years. When he was forty-five years old the persecution began at Yamaguchi and he was taken before the judge of the court for examination. When Damiano explained the truth of the Catholic faith the judge was afraid to kill this righteous man publicly. He sent all the friends of Damiano back to their homes and that night he directed that soldiers should take Damiano on horseback to a place called Ippon-matsu. Knowing that the end of his earthly life had come, Damiano prayed as he was taken from the horse's back. He was beheaded and his body was cut to pieces and scattered in the bushes, woods, and in the brook. On the same day many other missionaries and preachers were beheaded at Yamaguchi.

On January 11, 1609, Mitsuishi Hikozaemon and Hattori Jingoro were beheaded at Yatsushiro. Kato Kiyomasa imprisoned these two Christians for three years because they preached among the people of his dominion. They refused to be converted to Buddhism and finally Kiyomasa made the judge give them a sentence of death. As they walked up toward the place of execution the people encouraged these

two martyrs. Thomas, the son of Hikozaemon, twelve years of age, saw his father surrounded by the soldiers. He ran to his father and caught his hand and went with him to the execution place. As the father was beheaded Thomas sat beside him and prayed to Jesus that his father's soul might be received. Petoro, the son of Jingoro, was only six years old, but he also went to see the martyrdom of his father. (V) These two boys petitioned the judge that they might also go up to heaven after their fathers. They were beheaded with the same sword by which their fathers had died. It is said that the judge, Kakuzaemon, became a Christian after two years. He must have been deeply impressed by this martyrdom of Christians in which he had himself participated.

Chapter IV

RECORD OF MARTYRDOM, Part 2

(W) On August 24th, 1612, a Japanese Samurai named Bonabentura and a townsman called Kita Kiemon were put to death in Kyoto. Bonabentura believed in Christianity and he and his feudal lord had been baptized on the same day. The lord's wife did not share her husband's faith, and she had Bonabentura killed soon after her husband's death. Under the rule of this wicked woman there was an earnest Christian named Kiemon. He did much charity work among poor people and performed good service for the community of Christians. A judge who was the uncle of the wicked woman called Kiemon to his mansion to question him and Kiemon answered that there is only one God and that men must worship only this one God. The judge was much angered at this reply and ordered his vassal to slay Kiemon with the sword. Kiemon did not resist and died chanting the name of Jesus.

(X) In the year 1613 a Christian named Apponario was taken into custody at Asakusa in Edo. He was put in a cell partly filled with animal dung, and was given no food. At the end of four days he died.

In the same year a Christian named Iohane Matsuemon was caught by policemen at his own home at Arima and was taken to the top of a mountain from which he was hurled into the bottom of a gorge.

On January 28, 1613, a judge of Arima invited Thomas Heibeye and his younger brother Matias as guests at his feast. As these two brothers sat at table they were suddenly killed by swords. Heibeye had a mother named Martha, a wife called Jusuta, and two sons named Yusut and Yakobo. On the following day soldiers were sent to the house of Martha and they told her that she and her two grandsons had been ordered to be killed. Jusuta was very sorry that she was not counted among the martyrs. But her two sons said, "Mother, we go to heaven to-day. Jesus lets you live to bear witness in this world. Goodbye! We will meet you again in heaven,--our father and grandmother too." By these words the mother was much encouraged. Soon the three victims were sent to the execution place and were killed by the sword.

In the year 1613 General Ieyasu ordered his vassals to persecute Christians in Edo. At that time there was a church at Asakusa, in Edo, and many who had leprosy and other diseases, and also those who had no employment, were cared for in this church under the care of good Christians. But many leaders were imprisoned in the year 1613. They were bound up by their hands and feet and were beaten with bamboo rods in the effort to convert them to Buddhism. As the representative of the prisoners one Iohane answered, "We are very proud to be persecuted for the sake of Jesus. Persecution and even death cannot make us converts to

Buddhism." The judge was much angered at hearing this resolution of the Christians. On August 16, 1613, he ordered that all Christian leaders who were in prison should be killed. Many were beheaded that day at Asakusa. The heads were hung on the outside of the prison wall so that every one who passed the highway by the wall could see them. They remained there for a week, until dried by the heat of the sun.

On September 7, 1613, Polo, Yoheye, and a younger brother of Yoheye, and Juan Mito were put to death in Edo. Juan Mito continued to preach while he was walking toward the execution grounds. He was a good preacher and a disciple of Father Sotelo. He confessed before spectators that he had hoped, once, to be saved by Shintoism. One winter he had worshiped the gods at Atago-temple in Shiba, and walked around the temple with naked body, but he had received no answer from those gods. When he heard the true Gospel from his friend he went to Nambanji, that is the Christian Church, and there he found the true salvation from the true God.

In the year 1614 an earnest Christian called Benedict Nozu was arrested with his wife and daughters, in his home in Bungo. The policemen made all members walk naked through the streets of cities and towns for many days, to put them to shame. But none of them would turn to Buddhism, and finally the policemen became angry, put them all into straw sacks, threw them into a ditch, and killed them all on

April 6th.

In 1614 Adam Arakawa, a very old man, was arrested by a judge named Shiroemon, at Shikishima, Hizen. He was bound to a post in the prison for sixty days and then led to the execution ground. (Y) Among a great mass of spectators he was beheaded, and it is said that the head cried out twice calling the name of his Lord, "Jesus! Jesus!" This occurred June 5, 1614.

On November first of the same year a Samurai Christian named Johane was killed by order of a judge named Kuheye, in Suruga. The front of his head was branded with a cross, six fingers were cut off, and he died in torment.

In 1614 Judge Hasegawa persecuted the Christians at Arima. He arrested seventy of them on November 20th and sent them to the execution ground. The ground was fenced with bamboo poles around it and a thousand soldiers were prepared there to watch the Christians. They were brought in one by one, naked. The men were nailed by their feet to logs and their heads were beaten with sandals. The women were nailed by their thighs to logs and their hair was plucked out; after this cruel treatment they were all killed by the sword. Michael Kaboshi, a boy of nineteen years, jumped into the place over the fence and confessed that he was also a Christian. He was put to death with the other martyrs. This occurred on November 20, 1614.

On December 26, 1614, a Samurai named Sawa Heiemon was beheaded at Fushimi. He was a vassal of Ieyasu, and a good warrior. When he became a Christian at the age of thirty-four years he was exiled to a certain island. While he was living at Fushimi near Kyoto he was arrested by the mayor there, his clothing was stripped off, and he was put into a ditch full of dirty water. He was ordered not to climb up the bank but to remain in the water. The Samurai, upheld by his faith, did not die in the water, and after remaining there for six days he was sent to prison. Heiemon preached in the prison and baptized three jailers there. The mayor became much angered, had Heiemon taken to the bank of the River Uji where he was beheaded and his body thrown into the river.

(Z) Rolentio was the son of a doctor who was attending the General governor in Edo. He was baptized by Sotelo, became a Franciscan preacher, and nursed the people having leprosy in Amakusa. In 1612 he was imprisoned with twenty-six other sick people and was ordered to be beheaded. Because of his father's position he was not killed. He returned to Edo, where he served the people having leprosy. Eventually he contracted the disease and died on December 20, 1617.

(a) On October 6, 1619, fifty-two Christians were crucified at Fushimi, and then they were burned. The soldiers put all

the victims into carts and drove them through the streets. One soldier announced, "These are Christians, therefore we are going to kill them at the stake by order of our General." Then one of the victims answered, "Yes, we are Christians, and we are glad to die for the sake of our Lord. Glory be to God." They repeated these words along the way. When they arrived at last at the execution ground all the victims were bound to a cross and fire was started at the foot of each cross. Among the victims was a woman named Hashimoto Tekura. She was crucified with a small baby in her arms. When the smoke of the fire enclosed the victims another daughter of Hashimoto (Katarina by name, and thirteen years old) called her mother from a neighboring cross, and said, "Mother, I can see nothing more." Then the mother answered, "Call the name of Jesus and Maria." Thus all the martyrs, fifty-two in number, died chanting the name of Jesus and Maria from the cross.

(b) On November 18, 1616, another martyrdom at the stake took place at Nagasaki. It was at the same spot where twenty-six saints were crucified in 1597. Five Christians were bound to posts and burned. The rope binding Leonald Kimura was burned and he fell to the ground. He grasped some burning wood, raised it above his head, and sang loudly, "We praise thee, O God." . . etc. Many children who were among the spectators, hearing his hymn, all began, with one voice, to sing the same tune with Leonald. One of the spectators rushed into the fire and snatched an arm of

Dominico Georgeo, a Portuguese martyr, and ran away. But the ashes of all the other martyrs were thrown into the sea.

③ On March 22, 1620, Matias was put to death in Arima. He was a preacher of the Jesuits who worked earnestly fifteen years for Jesus' sake. When his service toward the Christian prisoners was detected he was suddenly arrested. He was tortured with cold water, then he was trodden upon by the rulers. But he answered them nothing so his tongue was torn out and he was killed.

On October 7, 1621, Petero Arasugi was beheaded at Omura because he was a hotel-keeper for the Christian workers. On the same day many other Christians were beheaded with him. Three days after Petero's death his wife Agata was also arrested, with her family. Agata had a baby in her womb. The judge sympathized with her and said, "If you give up your faith, I will let you and your baby live, and I will bring up your child." But she shook her head and answered him, "My child and I will choose the holy martyrdom rather than to live as infidels." And she was beheaded with her mother Jusuta and her sister Maria on October 10, 1621.

④ On September 10, 1622, twenty-two Christian preachers were burned at the stake and thirty laymen were beheaded at Nagasaki. Those who were to be burned seemed to be very happy to go to heaven soon and their faces were shining. The spectators sang hymns in which the martyrs also joined.

Spinola, the father, began to preach to the executioners and the soldiers from the post. "I came from a far country beyond the great ocean to save you and all Japanese souls. I do not care if my body be killed as my soul will not perish. But you are not obliged to receive the eternal gift of God, the salvation of your souls. I am sorry that you must gnash your teeth in the days of His judgment," etc. The soldiers burst into tears because they knew that these preachers were good men, but by order of Suke-dayu, the agent of the mayor, the soldiers placed a fire at the foot of each post. When all had died the soldiers put out the fires. They then beheaded thirty laymen, placing them on the straw mats. They placed the bodies of all the martyrs in the execution ground for three days and allowed all the people of Nagasaki to visit the place. Then the bodies were placed in sacks and thrown into the sea. (e) Meanwhile there appeared in the execution grounds, every night, a great light, and the people of Nagasaki were much afraid of this. Many more believed in Jesus and were baptized. The agent of the mayor died suddenly while at supper, a month after his judgment of the Christians. People said that the judge of the earth was judged by heaven.

(e) On December 4, 1623, punishment at the stake also took place in Edo. In September of that year Tokugawa Hidetada resigned his seat as General to Iemitsu. This third General of the Tokugawa family sent forth a proclamation forbidding Christianity. And he let all Daimyos in the districts persecute the Christians to the utmost.

One day the mayor of Edo reported to the General that he had arrested Elonimo, the Jesuit father, Garwes, the Franciscan, and many other Christians. The General Iemitsu was very angry with the mayor and said, "Why! what is your report? You said you had no preachers of Christians in Edo a few days ago. And you say to-day that you have arrested many. I am not so much afraid of Christians in rural districts. But what shall I do if they perplex the people of Edo, the capital? Put them all to death at the stake." Thus the Christians in Edo were destined to be put to death. The place of execution was Shinagawa and there fifty people were prepared for martyrdom. On this day not only the rulers of the central government but many Daimyos around Edo gathered with a mass of people to witness the martyrdom of the Christians. One of the victims made a speech as soon as he arrived, saying, "I was a vassal of Tokugawa Ieyasu himself, Hara Mondo by name. But as I was enlightened and learned that Buddhism was a wicked religion I gave it up and became a Christian. I believed in Jesus, and for that reason I was persecuted. See my hands -- my fingers were all cut off; my legs were made lame by injuries. But my soul was saved by Jesus. I have eternal life, and I now go to heaven. I am a great victor; I fear no martyrdom."

The soldiers bound all the Christians to posts, placing a fire at the foot of each post. Elonimo prayed that the Father might forgive all who persecuted them, and that He might save all the people of Japan. The victims all died on December 4, 1623, at Jizomae, Shinagawa, Edo.

On September 4, 1624, those who were beheaded at Semmai, Sendai, are as follows: Umai Rokuemon (a Jesuit preacher); Madarena, wife of Rokuemon; Polo Shirobeye; Terasawa Tobeye; Shist Kaemon; Katarina, wife of Kaemon; Terasawa Taroemon; Rudobico Umai; Matias Terasawa; Anna, mother of Tobeye; Kobayashi Taroemon; Shist Rokuzo; and Maria, wife of Rokuzo.

We have more than a hundred and fifty records which were kept in the Catholic countries of Europe down to the present day. The records which I have quoted above are only of the main events of the martyrdom of Japanese Christians.

Chapter V

CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM

It was natural that there were great conflicts between the two different religions. (C) Even Buddhism had conflicted with Shintoism when it was first introduced into Japan. But eventually Buddhism amalgamated its faith with that of Shintoism, and Japanese Buddhism became a very different religion from that of its founder in India.

When Christianity was first introduced into Japan the intelligentsia of Japan thought that it was one of the many forms of Buddhism, because Xavier came by way of India. But later it was understood that Christianity was an entirely distinct religion.

The Buddhists especially were bitterly opposed to the Christians, and they began to conspire with their rulers, the feudal lords, to persecute the Christians. Among the Buddhist lords Mori Motonari, Matsu-ura Takanobu, and Kato Kiyomasa were the chief figures who hated Christianity and persecuted the Christians through conspiracy with the Buddhist Bonzes.

Some historians have thought that the central government persecuted the Christians because the governors feared a foreign invasion might occur if they tolerated Christianity. But in truth there was no ground for such fear since all the Catholic missionaries were men who loved peace and righteousness.

The real reason why the governors doubted the foreign fathers was that the Buddhist feudal lords and bonzes

persuaded the government to persecute the Christians and the people were taught to hate Christianity.

(h) The Christian Daimyos like Omura Sumitada, Takayama Ukon, and Otomo Sorin were men of high character and were honored and loved by their people very much. They had very faithful vassals and faithful subjects. The Buddhist Daimyos were jealous of the Christian Daimyos. The Buddhist bonzes had also great jealousy toward the Christian missionaries, because the Christians were becoming as numerous as blades of grass after a rain, while Buddhist believers were not obliged so earnestly to obey the teachings of the bonzes.

Leon Pages tells us that 2,000,000 people (including children) were baptized in the eighty-two years from 1549 to 1630.

Tokugawa Ieyasu, Hidetada, and Iemitsu believed in neither Christianity nor Buddhism, but they persecuted the Christians and listened to the Buddhist Daimyos for political reasons, in order to centralize the feudalistic system of the age and to make themselves powerful governors.

Here let us examine the Buddhism of that age in order to know why the two religions were in conflict.

As has already been mentioned, Japanese Buddhism is a somewhat different religion from that of the founder; many new sects being invented in the period from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries.

① The Tendai sect may be characterized as the harmonizing, comprehensive sect. Tendai attempts to follow all the contradictions of the voluminous Mahayana and Hinayana scriptures as being the direct teachings of the founder of Buddhism. It was Chi Kai, the founder of the Tendai sect in China, who worked out an elaborate harmonizing scheme by which he tried to show how every Buddhist scripture has its own peculiar place and is the direct or indirect product of Sakyamuni's mind. This system was brought to Japan by Saicho early in the ninth century. But the Japanese Tendai sect underwent certain changes and differs somewhat from the present Tendai sect in China.

Kukai was the founder of the Shingon sect. He also studied at the various centers of learning in China. He remained abroad several years and seems to have come into contact with various influences -- Buddhist and others. When he returned to Japan he brought with him many scriptures from the Chinese canon, and these he studied assiduously. He soon began to preach his new teachings, the core of which was that man can even in this present life attain Buddhahood since he is essentially one with the Eternal Buddha.

Honen became the founder of the great Jodo, pure Land or Paradise Sect (1175) which has as its chief tenets a semi-theistic conception of God, a doctrine of a personal future life, and salvation for all men who believe in the grace of Amida.

① Shinran founded the Shin sect. He was a disciple of Honen, but he thought that his master had not gone far enough in his exposition of the Amida doctrine, and so felt compelled finally in 1224 to establish an independent sect. This sect is the powerful Jodo Shinshu, the true pure Land Sect, usually spoken of by the shorter term, the Shin sect.

Between the founding of the Jodo and the Shin sects there was introduced from south China one of the main branches of the Dhyana school, namely, the Rinzai branch of the Zen sect. The Dhyana school of Buddhism reached China from India in the year 520 A. D. when Bodhidharma came to China as a missionary. The Zen sect in Japan dates from about the time of Eisais' second return from China, i.e. about 1191. In 1201 the reigning Shogun invited him to establish himself at the Kenninji in Kyoto, and later at the Kenchoji in Kamakura, which city became the center for the sect. The Zen sect is, originally, based on atheism. It is the training or the culture of the inner self, but it is doubted that it is truly a religion or not.

② Another great sect arose. It was the Nichiren sect founded by Nichiren in 1253. The founder opposed all the other sects and preached that all monks would descend to hell unless they became converted to the Nichiren sect. Nichiren felt that the monks of other sects were dividing Buddhism, and especially that the Amida sects were taking away the glory of Sakyamuni and giving it to another,

namely Amida. And on the other hand, with a divided religion Japan would be a divided nation, and so both religion and state would be destroyed. That is why he cries in one of his impassioned utterances,^① "Awaken, men, awaken! Awaken, and look around you. No man is born with two fathers or two mothers. Look at the heavens above you: there are no two suns in the sky. Look at the earth at your feet: no two kings can rule a country."

But this wonderful religious outburst of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was followed by a sad decline. The General-governors of the Ashikaga family spent very luxurious lives in Kyoto, while they forced the poor peasants to pay about 70% of the produce of their fields as taxes. The Shogunate and all the feudal lords placed all the sects of Buddhism under their own control. Thus Buddhism became merely the instrument of the ruling class, and it could give neither peace nor rest to the hearts of the common people.

In those days, when Buddhism was entirely corrupted in Japan and the Christian fathers visited the country, the knight class and the Buddhists came to be the bulwark of the politicians who could not bear to see the true light, Christianity. Hence there arose a great conflict between the two religions.

Among the many sects of Buddhism, the Nichiren sect was the most intolerant toward Christianity. The rulers who persecuted the Christians were mostly believers in this Nichiren sect, it being the best among the various sects

of Buddhism. However, I cannot sympathize with Koto Kiyomasa and other feudal lords who utilized their faith for the sake of politics and so hated Christianity.

I quote a few verses from the scripture of the Nichiren sect, "the Good Law of the Lotus", and we can see what the scripture teaches us. Regarding the power of salvation of the deity the scripture tells us the following:

(m) "The Lord Sakymuni answered the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Akshayamati: all the hundred thousands of myriads of kotis of creatures, young man of good family, who in this world are suffering troubles will, if they hear the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara be released from that mass of troubles. Those who shall keep the name of this Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, young man of good family, will, if they fall into a great mass of fire, be delivered therefrom by virtue of the lustre of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva. In case, young man of good family, creatures, carried off by the current of rivers, should implore the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, all rivers will afford them a ford. In case, young man of good family, many hundred thousand myriads of kotis of creatures, sailing in a ship on the ocean, should see their bullion, gold, gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, conch shells, corals, emeralds, Musaragalvas, and other goods lost, and the ship by a vehement, untimely gale cast on the island of Giantesses, and if in that ship a single being implores Avalokitesvara,

all will be saved from that island of Giantesses. For that reason, young man of good family, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara is named Avalokitesvara. If a man given up to capital punishment implores Avalokitesvara, young man of good family, the swords of the executioners shall snap asunder. Further, young man of good family, if the whole triple chilicasm were teeming with goblins and giants, they would by virtue of the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara being pronounced lose the faculty of sight in their wicked designs. If some creatures, young man of good family, shall be bound in wooden or iron manacles, chains of fetters, be guilty or innocent, then those manacles, chains of fetters shall give way as soon as the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara is pronounced. Such, young man of good family, is the power of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara. If this whole triple chilicasm, young man of good family, were teeming with knaves, enemies, and robbers armed with swords, and if a merchant leader of a caravan marched with a caravan rich in jewels; if then they perceived those robbers, knaves, and enemies armed with swords, and in their anxiety and fright thought themselves helpless; if further, that leading merchant spoke to the caravan in this strain: Be not afraid, young gentleman, be not frightened; invoke, all of you, with one voice the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, the giver of safety; then you shall be delivered from this danger by which you

are threatened at the hands of robbers and enemies; if then the whole caravan with one voice invoked Avalokitesvara with the words: Adoration, adoration be to the giver of safety, to Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara! then, by the mere act of pronouncing that name, the caravan would be released from all danger."

I am not discussing here who this powerful saviour is, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara; whosoever it may be we can imagine that the scripture itself is the record of a powerful imagination.

The motives of the faith of Buddhists to be saved are very different from those of Christians. The motives of Buddhists are somewhat selfish and very egoistic. They pray to their deity for their own sake and utilize religion and faith for their own happiness; but no one would be willing to die for the sake of Buddhism. It lacks entirely the ideal of the Kingdom of God; and it has no personal and historic saviour who sacrificed himself for the sake of believers. Enlightened Sakyamuni himself did not offer his body in behalf of the salvation of his followers, and it is quite natural that Sakyamuni had no followers who would die the death of martyrdom for the sake of their master.

I would examine again the revelation of the deity of Buddhism to this world. On this subject the scripture reads as follows:

⑫ "Again the Lord replied to the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Akshayamati: In some world, young man of good family, the

Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara preaches the law to creatures in the shape of a Buddha; in others he does so in the shape of a Bodhisattva. To some beings he shows the law in the shape of a Pratyekabuddha; to others he does so in the shape of a disciple; to others again under that of Brahma, Indra, of a Gandharva. To those who are to be converted by a goblin, he preaches the law assuming the shape of a goblin; to those who are to be converted by Isvara, he preaches the law in the shape of Isvara; to those who are to be converted by Mahesvara he preaches assuming the shape of Mahesvara. To those who are to be converted by a Kakravartin, he shows the law after assuming the shape of a Kakravartin; to those who are to be converted by an imp, he shows the law under the shape of an imp; to those who are to be converted by Kubera, he shows the law by appearing in the shape of Kubera; to those who are to be converted by Senapati, he preaches in the shape of Senapati; to those who are to be converted by assuming a Brahman, he preaches in the shape of a Brahma; to those who are to be converted by Vagrapani, he preaches in the shape of Vagrapani.

With such inconceivable qualities, young man of good family, is the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara endowed. The Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, young man of good family, affords safety to those who are in anxiety. On that account one calls him in this Saha-world Abhayandada."

Here we see that Buddhism stands for pantheism; or we should say that it believes in the universal revelation of its deity. Hence there is no reason why Buddhists should persecute Christians. Why should they not think that "to those who are to be converted by Jesus, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, he shows the law under the shape of Jesus." They should think thus.

But Buddhism in the age of the Catholic missions in Japan was a Buddhism quite corrupted and degenerated into an instrument of politics; and there was great conflict between this corrupted religion and the true faith. When any religion becomes merely an instrument of political rulers we cannot expect of it the real power of salvation or the true light which lighteth the hearts of all men.

Chapter VI

WITNESS OF A SHINTO PRIEST

① In the end of the age of the Tokugawa Shogunate, Christians were discovered, many times, in the district of Nagasaki, and they were all persecuted by the governors. In 1791, nineteen Christians were arrested at Uragami and were persecuted; and in 1841, and 1856, again and again, the persecutions took place in the same district. In 1868, about 4,000 people were arrested and they were all banished to several places in the main island (Honshu). Sixty of these banished Christians were imprisoned at Hagi, Nagato. These sixty men were all the masters of the families; and in 1871 their family-members, 260 in number, including women and children, were banished into many places in Honshu.

② Now, in those days, there lived at Hagi, Nagato, a Shinto Priest whose name was Takuma Heisaku. He belonged to a higher class of Shinto-priests, and he was commissioned by the Governor of Hagi to preach Shintoism among the Christians to try to convert them. This priest, once, met to Father Villion, when the Christianity was tolerated in the Japanese land; and he told to Villion how he had treated the Christians in the days of persecution. The following is the true story which Mr. Takuma, a Shinto priest, told to Father Villion. He says as follows:

In 1868, one hundred sixty-eight Christians, all masters of families, were arrested at Uragami and six other villages

near it. And they were banished to several places in Honshu-island as prisoners, 30 being sent into Tsuwano, Iwami; 20 into Fukuyama, Bingo; 60 into Hagi, Nagato; and others into some unknown places, were imprisoned. This was the year of war of political restoration of Japan, and the Lord of Hagi had no room in the prisons, for Christians. He let them live in a large cottage near a beach. But the order came from the central government for the Christians to live not on the beach, but near the castle of the lord; so the Christians were allowed to live in two mansions called Shimizu-yashiki and Iwakuni-yashiki, which were near the castle.

I was appointed to preach among the Christians in Iwakuni-yashiki. And visiting the mansion every day I preached to them of our national goddess Amaterasu. At first I thought I could persuade them very easily, and convert to Shinto; for I was a learned man while they were unlearned. But my expectation was quite turned over. I was, many times, persuaded by them. They were wiser than I. They could speak more eloquently than I could.

Meanwhile an old man named Unosuke died, and his body was treated as that of a domestic animal. His corpse was buried in the ground without any religious ceremony. When I saw this, a good idea came into my mind. I thought I could find a good method to persuade them. One day, I called together only old men who were 60 to 80 years in age. They were seven in number. And I said to them:

"Now, my friends, did you see how Unosuke was treated? Was he not treated like a dead dog? If you would have died in this mansion, you should be treated just like Unosuke, like a domestic animal. Now, repent yourselves of your religion and believe in Shintoism; then I will ask my lord that you might be sent back to your home. Would you not like to go back to your home and see your grand children?"

But alas! my advice was in vain. The old men wept, and they shook their heads. Truly, old men spoke nothing: but young men discussed with me, many times, concerning their faith. Among them Ichizo, Sogoro, Genpachi, Jinzaburo, and Senzaburo were very eloquent speakers, and they persuaded me saying:

"Good officer! Will you kindly allow us to speak to you? Our religion is the only one true way which was given by above. The Tokugawa Shogunate was perished already, because she did not obey the true way and persecuted the Christians. But we believe there are many enlightened men among the present governors of the new age (Meiji). Therefore, will you please write a letter to the Central Government that they might understand this true religion and tolerate the Christianity? This we ask you not for our own benefit, but for the sake of welfare of the Japanese nation. Officer! Is it not for your own glory and fame to do that?"

Hearing these words I became very angry against them; yet I knew that they had suggested a great thought to me. They were merely farmers, but they were wiser than I. And for

that reason their faith must be something great, to which I must pay honor.

I was convinced, but as I was not generous enough to hear them at that moment I answered to them:

"You are too much partial and obstinate in your faith. The Government-officers had nothing to do with the thought of religion. They do every thing according to their civil law. Therefore you can not persuade them as you do of me."

Now, a few years had passed by, and in the spring of 1871, there came a report that their family-members in Uragami were being sent to Hagi, 260 in number including women and children. The men-prisoners all went down to the beach to see their wives and children. The women and children of Christians were also very glad to see their husbands or fathers. Alas! the gladness of them was only for a little while. Only few of the men could find their families, while the majority of them could not. They who should have been sent to Hagi were sent to other places, and those who should have been sent to other places were sent to this Hagi; and but few Christians, fathers and children, husbands and wives, could meet each other in this beach.

From this time on, I was very busy. I continued to preach Shintoism among them, and found that the faith of women and children was as strong as that of men. One day, after I had preached to them, a woman named Osaku stood up among the audience, and began to discuss against me.

"My officer, you called our God a foreign god. But our God is not merely a foreign God. He created all the world, and rules over all the people in the world. Therefore He is the God of Japan as well as He is the God of the foreign countries. Officer, do you know who had created you? It is the God, the Creator of the world, the Father of the life. Then, not only we, but also you must believe in this God, the father of the life. You, a child, have no right to persuade us to forsake the Father."

Another woman named Otsuya, often discussed my preaching. She said as follows:

"Officer! you ask me to believe in gods of Shintoism to go to Takamagahara; but we Christians believe in Heavenly God, and we would go to Paradise. ^(P) This is the true ideal of all mankind to believe in Heavenly God and go to Paradise. But the believers of Shintoism do not know the true ideal of mankind. They do not know eternal life, and they do not know where they should go in the future. The priests of Shinto sell them some talisman. The blessing of Shinto-gods is sold and got with money. The Buddhists and Shintoists seem to be merchants of God's blessing. Such a religion like Shintoism has no power to save the souls of men. In our religion, the blessings of True God can not be got with money. We forsake money, house, land, and everything, and get the salvation of soul. Even our lives we are very glad to offer on the altar of our God. Think how different our religion is from your religion."

The above was the story that Mr. Takuma told to Father Villion. He listened, very often, to the Christian prisoners, though was not formally converted to Christianity, he confessed that he could understand that Christianity was the better religion than Shintoism, and that the Christians whom he had treated were very good people. He was taught this truth through the long experience of his priesthood.

When Father Villion was told this witness from the mouth of a Shinto Priest he burst into tears, and thanked to God who had guarded the souls of Japanese Christians from generation to generation, these two hundred fifty years. God had guided them by the Holy Spirit without any Church father to a strong faith.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

While writing this short "Record" one of my friends visited my home and became very angry with me after reading the above discussion. "Why do you write only the dark side of Japanese history? Is it not our shame to show to white people only the fault of the Japanese?" I replied, "I do not know whether it is the shame or the glory of the Japanese."

To my way of thinking, there is no difference between the Jews and the Greeks, between white people and yellow. Those who oppose the truth and the way of God, they are the men of shame; and those who obey the truth and the way of God, they are the men of virtue. I feel no shame in showing the facts of the Japanese rulers and of the Japanese Christians before white people. The shame is not that of the Japanese people as a whole -- it is that of the Samurai class. If, as Dr. Nitobe maintains, the Samurai were virtuous, why did most of them hate the truth of God and kill innocent people? If the peasants and townsmen were immoral, as many teachers of Japanese ethics say, why did these so-called lower people die the death of martyrdom for the sake of truth and of God? Dr. Nitobe and other teachers cannot explain historical facts with ethics.

I do not intend to discuss the matter with the old-fashioned leaders of Japan. There is nothing good unless

it comes from above. No one can understand true virtue unless he is led by the spirit of God. It is quite useless to carry on discussion with the self-deceived nationalists of Japan. Only those who are born from above can see the Kingdom of God, can realize the true virtue, and can even die a holy martyrdom for the sake of truth. The unredeemed man cannot realize true virtue at all. There is no difference between white people and yellow, between the Samurai and the peasants -- all are destined to be brought to the judgment of God.

⑤ Do not say, "Japan has a long history of two thousand six hundred years." It was the history of the oppression of one class by another, but it was not a history of humanity and righteousness. Is it not true that the Japanese rulers buried their slaves alive with their masters when the latter died? Just as the Japanese were practicing this cruel ceremony the Romans had perfected a democratic form of government on the banks of the river Tiber.

Hence the Japanese should not be proud of their history. There has been little that was good in the past, except the faith in the hearts of the true Christians. There will be nothing good in the future unless the people believe in Christianity, with minds humbled before God. Happily, the Japanese have hearts of faith; their hearts must be turned toward Jesus Christ.

The future destiny of Japan hangs upon this faith. If the Japanese will believe in Jesus and become Christians, the

nation will be blessed and glorious and happy as long as the earth shall exist; nay, even after the earth passes away. But if the people trample faith in their hearts and remain infidel, then only the Judgment of God will be their destination.

(t) I had a good friend, a Christian, in my native Japan. He died as a martyr on the day of the earthquake in the Kwanto district. He was named Higuchi Gensaku, a farmer, who was raising rice on his small water-field at Nakajo, Naka-Uonuma-gun, Niigata-Ken. Nearly fifteen years ago his eldest son died of Phthisis after many years of illness. Due to this illness the father lost almost all his possessions, even his land, and he could live no longer by farming. But he did not lose faith in God; nay, he became more rich in faith, while he had lost the property of this world. He went to Tokyo and there he became a peddler of clothing, living with his family in a small house in the slums of Honjo district. He was a very faithful man, like John Bunyan in England. Though he was busy, he did not neglect to preach the Gospel in the streets of Tokyo whenever he had time. Those who knew him all praised the virtue of Mr. Higuchi, and they were led to the salvation of Jesus through his preaching.

(u) On September 1, 1923, there was a great earthquake at noon in the district of Kwanto in Japan. Unhappily there

were almost no parks or unoccupied spaces near the house of Mr. Higuchi to which people could escape. There was only one vacant lot here, called Hifuku-Sho-Ato. It was the place where there was a clothing depot of the Army, at one time in the past. Tens of thousands of people gathered together here to escape from the falling houses. Mr. Higuchi came here with his family. He began to preach among this mass of people, standing upon a wooden box. When the people realized that he was preaching about Jesus Christ, the foreign God, they became angry at him. "Do you say Jesus Christ? Do you say God? You fool! If God is, then what is this calamity? Do you say God is the cause of this earthquake? Let us destroy such a god! Let us kill the preacher too!" Seeing the preacher did not cease his preaching, they began to pick up stones and throw them at Mr. Higuchi. Suddenly there arose a fire among the houses surrounding the lot and the people at the corner were killed by smoke and flames. In the center of the lot there was a small water-pool from a rain of a few days before. The mother of Mr. Higuchi was near this pool, and she called to her son, "Here, Gensaku, here is a pool. Come and save your life." Gensaku answered her, "Yes, mother, thank you." But he did not move from his stand, and continued to preach. Many people, not being able to bear the heat of the fire, pushed and tried to get into the pool. But those who saw that there was no escape had gathered together around the preacher and were listening to him.

He preached that there is a future life, that they who repent and believe in Jesus can have eternal life, and that now is the time to believe in Him. And those who heard him all said, "Amen." Those who were already Christians, those who heard the Gospel for the first time that day, and those who had persecuted him but a few moments ago -- all prayed to God, confessing their sins, and asking forgiveness through the mercy of Jesus Christ. Mr. Higuchi opened his Bible and began to read the sixth chapter of St. John, and he read as follows:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." (37-40).

While Mr. Higuchi was reading these verses the fiery wind came over the group of people and this brave preacher fell from his stand and died with his beloved followers.

On this day more than 40,000 people perished in this place called Hifukusho-Ato, and only thirty or forty were

left alive in the pool under the dead bodies. The mother of Mr. Higuchi remained alive, but his children died beside their father. Among those remaining many went to the churches and were converted and baptized soon after the day of the calamity. They all bore witness to the brave scene in the last day of this good martyr.

Notes of the thesis.

- (A) Cary: A History of Christianity in Japan. pp 13 - 14
- (B) Nitobe: Bushido. pp 1 - 2
- (C) ----- pp 15 - 16
- (D) ----- pp23 - 157
- (E) ----- pp 159 - 160
- (F) Luke 18 : 19 and John 3 : 3
- (G) Griffis: The Religions of Japan. pp 325 - 349
- (H) Refer to
Yamamoto's A History of Christianity in Japan. pp 16 - 25
- (I) Refer to - - - - - pp25 - 118
- (J) Griffis seems not to know why Mitsuhide assassinated
Nobunaga. But my statement of the reason why Mitsuhide
did it is based upon the statements of many authoritative
Japanese historians.
- (K) Kiyomasa was more successful in war than Yukinaga, because
the former was cruel to his enemies, while the latter was
kind even to his enemies.
- (L) Griffis says that the Christian fathers taught the Christ-
ian Daimyos to persecute their Buddhist subjects, but in
truth, the fathers did not. (Griffis' page 339)
- (M) The names of original writers of records are unknown,
but the compilers are known.
- (N) Refer to
Pages' Histoire des vingt-six martyrs japonais.
- (O) Because Japan is a volcanic country a raining of ash is
a natural phenomenon in the land.

- 84
- (P) The people in Tosa district have the same tradition as this statement of Pages.
 - (Q) Whether Mitsunari was a Christian or not, there are different opinions among Japanese historians, but anyhow he had favored Christianity.
 - (R) Kiyomasa is honoured by the believers of Nichiren-sect as one of the great Buddhist heroes in Japan.
 - (S) Refer to Cary's History pp 150 - 153
 - (T) Refer to Steichen's The Christian Daimyos.
 - (U) Damiano is not a Japanese name. His first name is unknown. But the story itself is very inspiring. Many dramatists make use of the story.
 - (V) Catholic fathers, earnestly, taught Japanese the fact of the future life, and the holiness of martyrdom.
 - (W) Refer to
Crasset's History of the Western Religion in Japan.
 - (X) Refer to Anesaki's Kirishitan Religion in Edo.
 - (Y) The story was told by Father Villion, but it seems somewhat superstitious. We have no tradition that the head spoke something in the air. But in the time of religious fear such a story is apt to be invented.
 - (Z) Refer to Anesaki's statement.
 - (a) Refer to
Pages' Histoire de la Religion Chretienne au Japon.
 - (b) Refer to
Crasset's History of the Western Religion in Japan.

(c) Refer to

Cardim's Provinciae Japponiae ad Urbem Procuratore.

(d) Refer to Matsuzaki's

Testament of Blood of Kirishitans, pp 241 - 247

(e) Mr. W. Urakawa, a Cathoric preacher witnesses that there is a tradition about this fire among the old people in Nagasaki. But it seems not to be a fact. Probably, some one saw a visin (by illusion) of fire; and the story was exaggerated gradually as it was told from mouth to mouth.

(f) See Crasset's History.

(g) Refer to

Saunder's The Foreign Mission in Japan.

(h) Refer to Steichen's Book.

(i) Reischauer: Studies in Japanese Buddhism. pp 79 - 136

(j) A sect of Buddhism which was introduced by Japanese monks into America is this Shin-sect.

(k) Dr. Anasaki believes that this Nichiren-sect is the best sect among all sects of Buddhism.

(l) Refer to I. Kumata's Life of Nichiren pp 65 - 68

(m) Kern's Sacred Books of the East Vol. 21,
pp 406 - 409

(n) -----pp 410 - 412

(o) Refer to Yamamoto's

Stories of the Western Religion.

(p) See History of Catholicism at Yamaguchi, by Villion.

66

Pre A. Villion was born in France in 1843. He came to Japan in 1867 as a Catholic preacher, and has remained there ever since, being now 85 years old.

(q) Before the new era of Meiji most of the Japanese farmers had no family name, but first name only.

(r) See how strong was the faith of the future life in the hearts of Catholic Christians.

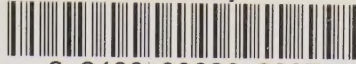
(s) Japanese ethical teachers are very proud of the long history of Japan itself, and of the moral life of the knight class.

(t) I know Mr. G. Higuchi and all the members of his family personally.

(u) The whole story was told to me by the old mother of Mr. Higuchi, and I contributed this story of his last scene to The Christian News, Feb. 1924.

FOR REFERENCE

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